the Cheif Justice of that High Court. The Government has, however, been requesting the Chief Justices of the High Courts, Chief Ministers and the Governors of the States, from time to time, to initiate proposals for filling up of the present and anticipated vacanices during the next six months. In response, the Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court has sent proposal for appointment of 5 Judges which is being processed.

Mining projects on forest land

552. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals cleared for mining projects on forest land so far by Government from 1998-2005, year-wise;

(b) the hectares of land involved;

(c) the number of affected people due to these projects, year-wise and State-wise;

(d) the names of the companies involved indicating how many are foreign companies; and

(e) whether these clearances have been given after consulting the different tribals representative institutions as mandated by the judgement of the Supreme Court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b): The details are given below:—

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 (upto 24.11.05)
No. of cases	108	117	141	98	109	53	118	137
Area diverted (In hectares)	7313.45	14512.00	5702.41	7699.10	1996.99	5878.34	7650.61	9722.77

(c) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House. However, under Section 5(1) of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957, only an Indian national or a

company registered in India can be granted a reconnaissance permit, prospecting licence or mining lease for exploration or mining of minerals.

Review of National Mineral Policy

553. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to encourage the public and private sector investments in mineral exploration, the Planning Commission has set up a high level committee to review the National Mineral Policy;

(b) whether it is also a fact that committee has recommended for amending the Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act, 1957;

(c) if so, the amendments suggested by the high level committee; and

(d) how his Ministry is thinking of simplifying and streamlining the existing procedure for granting permits and leases for mining?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Committee has not submitted its recommendations yet.

New law for adoption

554. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Supreme Court has directed her Ministry to enact a special law providing legal option of adoption of and by all person irrespective of the religion and sex consequent on demand from the persons belonging to Muslims, Christians, etc. and

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.